The depressed classes were represented by nomination in the Nagercoil Municipal Council. But the absence of an elected member was being keenly felt. The nominated member might not always represent the views of the community. Further, he might be too weak to assert his right. As an instance, the member said that, when 30 new lights were sanctioned for the Nagercoil Municipality, each ward was given two lights but none for the Sambavar villages. Such discrimination against the community could be avoided if a special constituency be established for the Sambavars for election to the Municipal Council. There were 70 voters among the depressed classes and 900 houses belonging to them in the Nagercoil Municipality.

166. Other needs of the Sambavars.

MR. K. MADHAVAN (*Member, Nominated*) thanked the Government for providing a few of the villagers of Nanjinad with house-sites. But many members of the depressed classes in Nanjinad had still no lands of their own to put up their huts. The number of such men was greater in Edanad. They lived as bondmen on the lands of rich landlords who might turn them out at any moment. They had to earn their livelihood by hard labour, but sometimes they could not find work. Such being the case, they could not put up new huts every time they were driven out by the landlords. Many people in Nanjinad lived on the banks of rivers and tanks. But while the number of families increased, there was no proportionate extension of house-sites. On the other hand, the lands already under occupation were gradually washed away by flood-water. It was therefore imperative to provide suitable house-sites for the Sambavar community. Two experienced men who were working for the welfare of that community should be selected and paid by the Goverment and asked to find out suitable plots of land for house-sites, in consultation with the local Sanitary and the Land Revenue officers. If the lands were found to be available for registry, they should be registered without *taravila*. All that could, in the member's opinion, be done in six months. If no suitable *poramboke* lands were available for the purpose, private lands should be acquired as in Mysore and British India and assigned to the Sambavars. Along with the assignment of such lands, the Sambavars should also be given loans repayable in easy instalments for building houses.

Although 19 wells had been sunk in Nanjinad, the need for more wells was being keenly felt. The members of the depressed classes generally used the impure water in the rivers and tanks. Being labourers, they had to be away during the major part of the day and when they returned home in the evening they could not go to distant places to fetch good drinking water and were satisfied with any water that was available near at hand. The use of impure water led to epidemics and deaths. Moreover, the rivers and tanks were dried up during summer. More wells should therefore be sunk in Sambavar villages. The Sambavars could not sink wells with the Government grant of Rs. 100 for each well, because the actual cost would be much more and the Sambavars were not able to meet the excess. The member also observed that the annual budget grants for sinking wells in the Sambavar villages usually lapsed, because of the dilatoriness on the part of the Public Works Department. Stringent orders should be issued to the authorities of that department to spend the allotted amounts.

The Sambavars were deeply indebted to the Government for opening as many as 16 village roads leading to Sambavar villages. But many of them had not yet been completed by the construction of culverts and drains. The remaining works in respect of the roads should be completed and they should be made fit for wheeled traffic.

There were many other villages which suffered from want of proper approach roads for facilitating easy transmission of food-stuffs and other goods. On account of the absence of roads, doctors and officers found it difficult to go to the villages in times of emergency or danger. Cattle also could not be easily taken to and from the villages. The petitions submitted by the villagers on such matters remained unattended to. The Karkad and the Kadetty roads were instances in point. For

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the Karkad road, the villagers had acquired the necessary land according to the directions of the Government. But it was regrettable that the road had not yet been completed. A sum of Rs. 3,000 was being allotted annually for the opening and maintenance of roads leading to Sambavar villages. But the major portion of it lapsed at the end of each year. The work might well be entrusted to the villagers concerned.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Madhavan, in regard to the first point of your representation, *viz.*, training of Sambavar women in midwifery and child-welfare, the Administrative Board, Medical Services, informs me that they have already seven qualified Sambavar women under training and they will do their best to increase the number.

In regard to the question of appointments, these are being made in accordance with qualifications and efficiency.

The question of scholarships has already been considered more than once by the Director of Public Instruction and other educational officers of the State, and you are aware of the decisions that have been come to already.

Your representation in the matter of nominations to the Council will be borne in mind.

As regards the Nagercoil Municipality, since you are so strong in the neighbourhood, I do not see why in a reasonable time you should not be able to get your members in by vote.

You have also referred to the question of the Karkad road. The Government are in complete sympathy with your desire and were anxious to carry out this beneficent work for the good of the people of the neighbourhood of Suchindram. They had drawn up plans and estimates and were ready to provide money. But that benevolent intention was not carried out because the proposal was vetoed by the Legislative Council.

Your other representations will be noted for consideration.

167. Needs of the Catholic Arasars of South Travancore.

MR. X. ALEXANDER (*Member, Nominated*) said that the main occupations of the Catholic Arasars were fishing and marketing the fish caught. For fishing purposes, *catamarans* were used. But the varieties of timber that could be made use of for making *catamarans* were not available in the coast villages and had to be brought down from inland forests and private lands. It was very difficult to purchase such timber from private persons. The Government could easily supply the timber required from their forests. Depôts should therefore be opened in coast villages for the sale of *catamaran* timber. Fuel could also with advantage be sold in those depôts inasmuch as that article of necessity was also not easily obtainable in coast villages.

The need for a road from Colachel to Tengapattanam was a long-standing complaint. Last year, when that matter was pressed, the Government rejected the request, the road being considered a luxury. As a matter of fact, it was an absolute necessity for facilitating the brisk trade in fish, copra, coir, etc., carried on in the eleven coast villages situated between the two towns. The villagers could also have prompter medical aid when necessary. Further, they had to go to Colachel even to post a letter.

The fisherfolk were proverbially uneducated and filthy. Their houses were not kept clean and they did not know the rules of sanitation. They dried their fish on the patches of ground in front of their houses. The villages were often subject to epidemics like small-pox and cholera. Some years ago, a conservancy agency was appointed by the Government to look after the sanitation of the coast villages, but that had been withdrawn. Arrangements should be made for the villages being inspected from time to time by a Sanitary Inspector, who should render the villagers all help in fighting out the diseases.

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